

Important Information on Gratts Elementary School  
Información importante sobre la Escuela Primaria Gratts

Information Repositories

Gratts Elementary School  
Administration Office  
309 Lucas Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
Telephone: (213) 250-2932

City of Los Angeles Library  
Echo Park Branch  
1410 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
Telephone: (213) 250-7808  
Monday and Wednesday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Tuesday and Thursday 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Department of Toxic Substances Control  
Regional Records Office  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630  
Contact: Julie Johnson  
Telephone: (714) 484-5337  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Los Angeles Unified School District  
Office of Environmental Health and Safety  
355 South Grand Avenue, Sixth Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90071  
Telephone: (213) 633-8242  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals

TDD users can obtain additional information about the Site by using the California State Relay Service (1-888-877-5378) to reach the Public Participation Specialist at (818) 551-2846.

Fact Sheet  
July 2002

*DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Department's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.*

State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency



Gratts Elementary School



REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION COMPLETED

Introduction

This fact sheet was prepared to provide the community with a summary of the findings and results of the Remedial Investigation conducted at Evelyn Gratts Elementary School (Gratts), located at 309 Lucas Avenue, Los Angeles, California. This environmental investigation was recently completed by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) with the oversight of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), a regulatory agency for the California Environmental Protection Agency.

The Remedial Investigation was conducted to determine the nature and extent of any hazardous substances on the school site that might pose a risk to public health or the environment. This fact sheet provides a brief site history, site description; and summarizes the investigation activities, results and conclusions. It also includes information on the health risk evaluation and future site activities. The complete Remedial Investigation Report and other project related documents are available for public review at the repositories listed on page 4. A glossary of technical terms used in this fact sheet has been included as an insert.

Conclusions

*The Remedial Investigation of the Gratts Elementary School is now complete. The results indicate that chemicals found at the site do not pose excess risk to human health and therefore the school is safe for students and faculty.*

Although there is no risk to the students or faculty on site from the contamination in soil and groundwater deep underneath the site, the Remedial Investigation concluded future site activities are necessary. In order to protect groundwater resources and address the potential for the contaminants in groundwater to migrate into the soil, further assessment of the groundwater will be conducted.

Site History

Residential structures occupied portions of the school site property from at least 1894 to 1990. One large single-story structure occupied the northern portion of the site on the south side of Third Street. During 1923 to 1984 this structure was used as an auto body paint shop, which included a spray booth, taxi garage and taxi maintenance facility. Retail stores were also located on Third Street from 1918 to 1988. Seven underground storage tanks (USTs), four hydraulic hoists, an elevator, and a three-stage clarifier for cleaning solvents, were located within or near the auto body shop and taxi garage. The remainder of the site was an asphalt-paved parking area. The elementary school was constructed in 1995.

Evaluation of the site occurred over several years. Early environmental investigations, which began during construction on the property, revealed contamination in the soil and groundwater beneath the site from past releases of petroleum hydrocarbons (gasoline byproducts) and cleaning solvents. Contaminated soils were excavated and either bioremediated (see glossary) and placed as fill onsite, or disposed of offsite. Additionally, groundwater wells were installed and groundwater samples were collected.

A cleanup system was installed onsite, which includes free product recovery (see glossary), groundwater extraction and treatment, and soil vapor extraction and treatment. Also, a 60- millimeter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) membrane vapor barrier was placed beneath two of the school buildings and the eastern half of the parking structure as a safety measure to block the potential migration (movement) of vapors from subsurface contaminated soils into the structures above.

In 1999, LAUSD requested the assistance of DTSC to oversee the remaining site investigation and cleanup activities for Gratts. DTSC requested a Remedial Investigation to further assess the impact of contaminants to soil and groundwater at Gratts.

### Site Description

The Gratts site is approximately 5.2 acres in size. It consists of the elementary school (comprised of three buildings) on the corner of Third Street and Lucas Avenue, an underground parking garage on the western portion of the property, classroom trailers in the southwest corner of the property, and a soil and groundwater remediation system within a fenced area. An asphalt recreation area and landscaping cover the remainder of the property. Commercial and residential land uses generally surround the school.

### Site Investigation Scope

The comprehensive Remedial Investigation of the site began in 1999. The investigation had three objectives:

- Identify sources of contamination under the Gratts site.
- Define the extent of contamination in soil gas, soil, and groundwater resulting from these sources.
- Evaluate risks to human health and the environment posed by the chemicals detected.

The field sampling conducted by LAUSD consisted of several phases including soil gas sampling, soil sampling, installation of groundwater monitoring wells and groundwater sampling.

Soil Gas Sampling (see glossary) was conducted at 40 locations onsite and four locations on Lucas Avenue adjacent to the northeastern portion of the site. Sampling locations were based on a grid system to provide representative coverage of the entire site and evaluate potential source areas. Soil gas samples were analyzed for volatile organic compounds.

Soil Sampling was conducted at 57 onsite locations and seven locations on the sidewalk adjacent to Third Street to evaluate contamination associated with historical operations. Soil samples were collected at all potential contamination source areas including former: Underground Storage Tank locations, hydraulic hoist areas, clarifier, paint shop area, and backfill areas to determine the content of the backfill. Soil Samples were analyzed for volatile organic compounds (see glossary), semi-volatile organic compounds, metals and petroleum hydrocarbons.

Groundwater monitoring wells were installed at three locations to further determine the extent of groundwater contamination. Groundwater samples were collected from the three new wells and the existing 14 wells. Groundwater samples were analyzed for volatile organic compounds, metals and petroleum hydrocarbons.

### Remedial Investigation Results

Based on the Gratts Remedial Investigation evaluation 50 chemicals including petroleum products, solvents and metals were identified in low concentrations (levels) in soil, soil gas and groundwater on the school site.

Results of sampling and analysis of soil gas found low concentrations, and low frequency of detection of volatile organic compounds indicating there is no significant soil gas contamination at Gratts. Analysis of the soil found low concentration of semi-volatile organic compounds and petroleum hydrocarbons were detected indicating no significant impact of these contaminants at Gratts. The range of metal (cadmium, lead, zinc and hexavalent chromium) concentrations detected at Gratts site was similar to concentrations found in any urban area.

Volatile organic compounds were detected at relatively low concentrations, except at one former gasoline underground tank area.

Higher levels of volatile organic compounds were detected in the area near a handicap ramp at depths greater than 10 feet. Groundwater sampling results showed volatile organic compounds and petroleum contamination beneath the site starting at the same location and moving in the same direction as groundwater flow. The local drinking water is not impacted.

### Human Health Risk Assessment

A human health risk assessment (evaluation) was conducted to determine if the concentrations of chemicals found onsite posed a potential health risk to students and faculty. Using the most reliable estimates of risk for unrestricted residential land-use chemical concentrations detected in soil gas, soil, and groundwater were below levels that could be expected to cause health problems, and do not pose a risk. Therefore, the health risk assessment determined Gratts Elementary School to be safe for students and faculty.

Using maximum contaminant levels detected onsite for evaluation the risk assessment indicated no significant health risks would occur from exposure to surface soils, combined surface and subsurface soils and chemical emissions into outdoor air. The total estimated cancer risk associated with combined surface soil, subsurface soil, and outdoor air were below the target risk goal and not considered significant. Additionally, no cancer related adverse health effects would be expected from exposure to combined surface soil, subsurface soil and chemical emissions into outdoor air. All estimated cancer risk health hazards associated with surface soil, subsurface soil and outdoor air were below the DTSC threshold level of concern.

Soil gas concentrations include both soil and groundwater sources, and provides the most representative source-term for potential migration (upward movement) of vapors into indoor air. No significant health risk would occur from breathing soil vapors originating from soil gas into indoor air under an unrestricted, residential land-use scenario. Chemicals were detected infrequently and at low concentrations in soil gas. Based on the health risk

assessment results, no significant health risk would occur from breathing soil vapors originating from soil gas into indoor air.

### Future Site Activities

The onsite cleanup systems will continue to operate until a determination is made regarding modification to the existing combined soil vapor extraction/ groundwater cleanup system and/or installation of a new system. Periodic monitoring and sampling will also continue.

A Feasibility Study (FS) to identify and evaluate cleanup systems, and develop cleanup goals will be conducted by LAUSD with DTSC oversight. Based on the FS, a cleanup approach will be selected possibly including the existing combined soil vapor extraction/ groundwater cleanup system. A proposed Remedial Action Plan (RAP) will be prepared to define the selected cleanup system and provide the basis for its selection.

Prior to making a final decision on the RAP, DTSC will give the public the opportunity to review and comment on the RAP. After the public comment period, DTSC will evaluate all of the submitted comments. If the RAP is approved, the cleanup approach selected in the RAP will be implemented.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions regarding the Remedial Investigation please contact: Treva Miller, DTSC Public Participation Specialist, at **(818) 551-2846**; or en español Sr. Eloy Florez, *Especialista en Participación Pública de el DTSC*, al **(818) 551-2875**; or Shahir Haddad, DTSC Project Manager, at **(714) 484-5302**. The DTSC Media Contact is Jeanne Garcia (818) 551-2176.

You can also call LAUSD representative Mr. Pat Schanen, at **(213) 633-8484**.